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DC Recycles!

...in Government Buildings

The Department of Health's Environmental Health Administration Leading by Example

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Earth's natural resources are not inexhaustible. By taking a little time at work and home to recycle paper, aluminum cans and plastic bottles, we can make a significant difference in the environmental health of our planet and the conservation of natural resources.

Paper, the most common workplace necessity, is one of the easiest products to reduce, reuse, and recycle. Paper made from recycled content rather than virgin fiber creates 74% less air pollution and 35% less water pollution. Yet the share of total paper fiber coming from recycled material has grown only modestly from 20% in 1921 to 38% today. This is a statistic that needs to change. The Department of Health's Environmental Health Administration (EHA) is doing its part by purchasing 100% recycled paper, reducing the amount of paper it uses, double-siding copies, and recycling all paper when it is no longer useful.

The Environmental Health Administration has adopted the motto, "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle", for its conservation efforts.

Bottles and cans are other items that EHA recycles. When consumers do not recycle, we waste virgin materials and generate excessive pollutants to manufacture billions of new cans and bottles. Recycling just one (1) aluminum can saves enough electricity to run a laptop computer for four (4) hours.

EHA's commitment to recycling not only protects the environment's natural resources, but also saves potentially recyclable items from entering landfills around the U.S. There are recycling bins set up in kitchenette areas on each floor of our office building, and paper bins near copiers and in other convenient locations. In addition, each office has a desktop recycling box for paper (i.e. newspapers magazines, brochures, catalogs, publications, Post-it Notes, envelopes, etc.). When



By encouraging employees to regularly recycle, EHA is hoping that conservation workplace habits transfer to the home as well. While working at 51 N Street, EHA student intern Dina Lee has become accustomed to recycling. "Recycling is better for the environment because we waste so much," Lee said. "I try not to throw anything in the trash that can be recycled."

A little time and sweat equity has greatly increased recycling efforts at EHA.

For more information concerning the DC Government Employee Recycling Program call the Office of Property Management (OPM) at 671-0136.



It's Official! Double-sided Copying Rules the Day!



All photocopying machines operated by DC agencies under the administrative authority of the Mayor are to be defaulted for double-sided copying. Single-sided copying maybe done only when the agency or entity receiving the document requires it —like legal and court documents. *Save paper, save money —double side your copying!* For a copy of Mayor's Order 2005-2, contact the Office of the Secretary of the District of Columbia at 727-6306.



Keep Employees Happy and Healthy... “Green” Your Office

By Andre Javier-Barry, DC Energy Office
Sustainable Solutions Division

Greening your office is easy and cost-effective if done in manageable steps. A green office not only contributes to a healthy environment; it also contributes to the health and comfort of the people who work there. Here are five simple steps you can take to green your workspace:

1. Less paper, less money, less burden.

The average office worker uses 12,000 sheets of paper a year and 40% of all municipal waste in the United States consists of paper.¹ Purchasing 100% post-consumer recycled paper helps to reduce what enters our landfills. But it doesn't stop there. Make double-sided (duplex) photocopies and use the blank side of any paper you have. Then, recycle your paper.

2. Change the lights.

Replace incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent lights (CFLs).

CFLs use one-quarter to one-third as much electricity as incandescent bulbs and last up to ten times as long.² Replacing your desk lamp bulb with a compact fluorescent will save money and keep your desk space more comfortably cool.

3. Just like home.

Paper and “Styrofoam” end up in landfills and can take millennia to decompose. Bring your own utensils and plates from home. If there is no place to store them, then purchase biodegradable utensils made of corn, wheat, or sugar cane. One place to look is www.simplybiodegradable.com.

4. Ride, run, walk... together!

Encourage car pooling, using public transportation, bicycling, or walking to work. These options reduce the stress of driving through traffic and cuts down travel expenses. And choosing to walk or bike combines your commute with your exercise.



5. Out with the old, in with the Energy Star®.

Replace computers and other appliances with Energy Star® certified products. Energy Star products use less electricity, save money, and protect our environment. You can find the certified products at www.energystar.gov.

References:

1. Co-op America. www.coopamerica.org
2. American Council for an Energy Efficient Economy. www.aceee.org



Support Recycling Efforts by Implementing Resource Conservation and Waste Prevention Programs



Did you know that one of the easiest ways to support your office's resource conservation efforts is by simply reusing office supplies? —Think how many times you have seen “old” office supplies tossed simply because they were left behind by a previous employee...

Next time this happens, contact your office manager to return any surplus or unused items to the supply closet.

Another good way to support waste prevention and source reduction efforts is by reviewing product or company specifications. When ordering new products, opt for less packaging or select products that can be recharged, reused or recycled.

District Recycling Coordinators Corner



Special thanks to employees at the Henry Daly Municipal building and One Judiciary Square for successfully embracing beverage and food container recycling as part of the buildings' recycling program this summer. Your active participation and support makes recycling work in government buildings! —Thank you!

Next Recycling Coordinators meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 7, 2005 at 10 a.m. at 441 4th Street, NW, Room 1117.

Topic: Option Year Two District-wide Toner Cartridge Recycling Contract and year-end reporting.